PAULA POUNDSTONE RELUCTANTLY TURNS TO P.R. Page 6B

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The Des Moines Register

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TOPS ON TV

'Ransom,' 7 p.m., Fox
When his own son is kidnapped and the FBI blows a chance to rescue the boy, a self-made airline tycoon (Mel Gibson) takes matters into his own hands by putting the ransom money to a different use.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS

Actress **Eliza Dushku** is 22. Singer **Tyrese** is 24. Actress-comedian **Tracey Ullman** is 43. "Today" show anchor **Matt Lauer** is 45. Country singer **Suzy Bogguss** is 46. TV host **Meredith Vieira** ("The View," "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire") is 49. Singer **Patti Smith** is 56. Singer **Davy Jones** of the Monkees is 57. Singer **Mike Nesmith** of the Monkees is 60. Actor **Fred Ward** ("The Right Stuff") is 60. Director **James Burrows** ("Cheers," "Taxi") is 62. Singer-guitarist **Bo Diddley** is 74.

FAMILY TIP

Have no regrets

One of my goals in life is to have no major regrets about my job as a parent. I think about this occasionally, and it helps me stay focused on what's really important. On my deathbed, I don't want to think or say, "I wish I had ..." or "I need to ..."
— K.S.D., Pittsburgh, Penn.

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E-mail a favorite parenting tip to kidtips@aol.com or fax it to (925) 461-6080.

LEND A HAND

Be a resource

YWCA of Greater Des Moines needs volunteers to work with Human Resources to place volunteers in positions. Call Cathy McFarlin at (515) 244-8961 ext. 408.

For more volunteer opportunities or to share one, visit www.unitedwaydm.org.

COOL WEB SITES

www.karosyrup.com
First seen on American tables in 1902, Karo products have sweetened dishes for decades. This product site offers nutritional facts, cooking and storage tips, kids' crafts and a company history.

ON THE WEB

Look for restaurant and movie reviews at **DesMoinesRegister.com /entertainment**

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Top 10 CDs of 2002

Roman Candle lights musical sky with a combo of Tennessee Williams-like lyrics and sounds worthy of Dave Matthews and Bob Dylan

By KYLE MUNSON
REGISTER MUSIC CRITIC

Eminem, Eminem, Eminem, Eminem, Eminem, Nelly, Eminem.

Now for the rest of the year in music, my picks for the best CDs:

1 Roman Candle, "Says Pop" (Outlook) — It took two brothers from the mountains of North Carolina, Skip and Logan Matheny, to lead us to a modern crossroads where Bob Dylan, Dave Matthews, Ryan Adams and Coldplay all meet for a songwriting session and end up with a batch of killer melodies as well as lyrics worthy of classic Southern fiction. The best CD of the year also is the most tragically overlooked. But these twentysomethings recorded "Says Pop" in their basement in Wilkesboro, N.C., so it's not like they've been wallowing in obscurity forever. But don't let the basement thing fool you; "Says Pop" sounds like the work of seasoned professionals through and through, from its big choruses (the sing-songy "I Wish I Was in New York") down through delicate ballads ("Sookie," a retelling of the myth of Cupid and Psyche) that lesser bands would mangle with overwrought gestures.

Skip's voice is malleable, and his guitar strumming radiates just as much confidence. Logan sounds like he's done his share of listening to hip-hop, dance music and the entire Led Zeppelin catalog — a broad ear that brings rhythmic complexity to songs that could still get by with standard folk-rock timekeeping.

Sample lyric: "Some people fall in love and some people go to jail. Some folks sit alone listenin' to 'Blood on the Tracks.' "

Check out the sound of tomorrow's R.E.M. today, or something like that.

2 Bright Eyes, "Lifted or the Story Is in the Soil Keep Your Ear to the Ground" and **Desaparecidos, "Read Music/Speak Spanish"** (Saddle Creek) — I'm not cheating by stuffing two CDs into a single slot. Indie rock singer-songwriter Conor Oberst of Omaha, all of 22, leads both the low-fi folk orchestra Bright Eyes and the more conventionally punk-rocking Desaparecidos. These bands are his yin and yang, and to consider one without the other would be a mistake. Listeners inevitably will prefer one of them (I choose Bright Eyes in a pinch), but it's better to consider how the sprawling arrangements and spiritual navel-gazing of Bright Eyes complements the feisty suburban social critiques of Desaparecidos. To use the Beatles' "White Album" as an analogy, Bright Eyes is "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" to Desaparecidos' "Helter Skelter."

3 Weezer, "Maladroit" (Geffen) — The flagship band of "geek rock" reimagines itself as the bastard child of Kiss and AC/DC. These aren't just the guys who wooed MTV with smiley-faced anthems "Undone — The Sweater Song" and "Buddy Holly" in the early '90s, nor the ones whose famously dark and difficult sophomore album "Pinkerton" inspired thousands of introspective mopes to pick up guitars. No, these chords come big and crashing, the hooks seize you by the throat, and Rivers Cuomo's lyrics tickle the ear with their oblique charm.

4 Blackalicious, "Blazing Arrow" (MCA) — Those who haven't forgotten progressive hip-hop groups De La Soul, A Tribe Called Quest and Digable Planets in the mad rush to crown Eminem king should revel in how this California duo's sophomore album hits the bull's-eye. MC the Gift of Gab and DJ Chief Xcel assemble a full quiver of soulful, jazzy songs that skew toward a positive vibe and take advantage of a broad roster of equally brilliant guests: legendary jazz-poet Gil-Scott Heron, slide guitarist Ben Harper, rapper Zach de la Rocha and like-minded rap crew Jurassic 5 (whose own 2002 sophomore CD doesn't equal the brilliance of "Blazing Arrow").

5 Missy Elliott, "Under Construction" (Elektra) — Nobody had as much fun in the recording studio in 2002 as rapper Missy Elliott, and

See **CDs,** Page 8B

Check out this lighthearted sampling of some of the favorite music around Iowa:

- **Most popular wedding song:** Etta James, "At Last"
- **Most popular songs at teen dances:** Avril Lavigne, "Sk8er Boi"; Nelly, "Hot in Herre"; and Eminem, "Cleanin' Out My Closet"

— Music in Motion disc jockey/karaoke service, Dubuque

- Soundtrack, **"8 Mile"**
- **Lil' Flip, "Undaground Legend"**
- **Jay-Z, "The Blueprint 2: The Gift & the Curse"**
- **Nas, "God's Son"**

— Biggest sellers of the year at hip-hip shop Eastown Music, Des Moines

- **Rod Stewart, "It Had to Be You . . . the Great American Songbook"**
- **Chris Botti, "Night Sessions"**
- **Randy Johnston, "Hit & Run"**

— Most popular CDs in rotation at Basil Prosperi Bakery, 407 E. Fifth St., Des Moines

- **Nelly** (especially "Hot in Herre")
- **Eminem** (especially "Without Me" and "Lose Yourself")
- **Avril Lavigne**

— Most requested artists according to Steve Saltzman of DJ service Steve's Mobile Music, based in Ames and Lenox

- **Troubled Hubble, "Penturbia"**
- **RJD2, "Deadringer"**
- **Unbunny, "Black Strawberries"**
- **John Vanderslice, "Life and Death of an American Fourtracker"**
- **Tullycraft, "Beat, Surf, Fun"**
- **The Mountain Goats, "Tallahassee"**

— Most-played CDs, according to Ben High, music director, KRUI 89.7 FM, University of Iowa, Iowa City

- **Audioslave, "Audioslave"**

— Slipknot and Stone Sour lead singer Corey Taylor's favorite CD of the year

British blokes lure U.S. babes

American celebrities leave men stateside and go for UK guys.

By CISAR G. SORIANO
USA TODAY

American beauties are discovering love on the other side of the pond.

Sci-fi pin-up Gillian Anderson, 34, has gone from hunting aliens in "The X-Files" to hunting men in Britain. She's dating Julian Ozanne, 38, a Financial Times foreign correspondent-turned-film producer.

Starlet Jennifer Love Hewitt, 23, is dating British actor Paul Nicholls, also 23. The couple co-star in the upcoming romantic comedy "If Only," currently shooting in London.

Chris Martin, lead singer of the British rock group Coldplay, played modest when a British tabloid asked him about his recent dates with actress Gwyneth Paltrow, 30.

"I feel uncomfortable talking about her. This is all very weird because she's a big Hollywood star, and I'm just a bloke from Coldplay," Martin, 25, told The Sun.

Even more weird: Paltrow caused an international incident in August when she said British men were inept at the dating game.

The part-time London resident has since changed her tune. "I happen to adore British men and I adore Britain," Paltrow later said.

And, of course, there is Madonna. The Detroit native loves the UK so much that she adopted a British accent and married British director Guy Ritchie.

Profiles of online dating service Match.com's 4 million members worldwide provide clues about what makes British men appealing:

- British men play more, but work and save less. "British men live in the present with their money, which might make for more fun on a date. Women like to be wined and dined," says Trish McDermott, vice president of romance (yes, that's her real title) for Match.com.
- American men are more likely to categorize their humor as "slapstick" or "goofy"; British men say they are more "witty," "dry" and "sarcastic."
- British men are less concerned with a woman's body type, hair or eye color, education and smoking and drinking preferences. But British men are less likely than Americans to date a woman who already has children.

Paltrow

Anderson

Madonna

Hewitt

Stars' faces lure readers

USA TODAY

Literary purists cringe, but publishers know the easiest way to sell a book is with a Hollywood cover:

- **"The Hours,"** Michael Cunningham's novel inspired by Virginia Woolf's 1923, "Mrs. Dalloway," became a best seller only after winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1999. Now it has another life: 250,000 copies with a film image of Meryl Streep, Julianne Moore and Nicole Kidman, who plays Woolf. The movie will likely open in Des Moines in January.
- **"Catch Me If You Can,"** Frank Abagnale's memoir of a con man, sold 86,000 copies after it was reissued in 2000. Now 250,000 copies carry a cover that copies the movie poster. Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks star. The movie opened Wednesday.
- **"Confessions of a Dangerous Mind,"** Chuck Barris' account of his schizophrenic life as a TV game-show host and CIA hit man was out of print until 75,000 copies of the movie tie-in edition were released this month with actor Sam Rockwell on the cover. The movie will open in Des Moines this winter.

This year, nearly all of the leading Oscar contenders were inspired by books, from J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers" to "Gangs of New York," based on Herbert Asbury's 1928 stories.

But Carol Fitzgerald, president of Book reporter.com, a Web site for book discussions, says she fears that, because of the economy, "People will make a choice to 'see the book' in 2003 instead of reading it. Movies cost less, require a smaller time investment and deliver instant gratification."

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